

Message Text

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SUBJ: GEPI ABSORBS TORRINGTON WORKFORCE

REF: (A) STATE 237429 (B) GENOA 0571 AND PREVIOUS

1. ITALIAN PRESS ANNOUNCED ON OCTOBER 15 THAT GEPI (SOCIETA DI GESTIONE E PARTECIPAZIONE INDUSTRIALI) WILL BE THE EMPLOYER OF LAST RESORT FOR THE APPROXIMATELY 9,000 WORKERS OF TWELVE QUOTE FINANCIALLY SICK UNQUOTE COMPANIES, INCLUDING TORRINGTON AND SINGER, WHOSE BENEFITS UNDER THE IPO-GEPI SCHEME EXPIRED ON SEPT.30. DECISION ENTITLES WORKERS TO BENEFITS FROM THE WORKERS SUBSISTENCE FUND UNTIL GEPI CAN RESUME PRODUCTION AT SHUT-DOWN PLANTS OR FIND ALTERNATE EMPLOYMENT FOR THEM. GEPI PLANS TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS ON FUTURE FATE OF EACH PLANT WITH UNION OFFICIALS STARTING OCTOBER 25.

2. GEPI ANNOUNCEMENT DEFUSED A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION BY NEARLY 150 TORRINGTON WORKERS BEFORE THE LOCAL PREFETTURA ON OCTOBER 14. DEMONSTRATORS HAD ERECTED A TENT FOR A LONGTERM VIVIL TO DEMAND GOVERNMENTAL ACTION ON THEIR BEHALF. INTERESTINGLY, TORRINGTON DEMONSTRATORS HELD GOI, NOT THE U.S. COMPANY, RESPONSIBLE FOR RESOLVING
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THEIR PROBLEM. WORKERS HAVE NOT, HOWEVER, YET ABANDONED

THEIR OCCUPATION OF THE TORRINGTON FACILITY, WHICH HAS JUST ENTERED ITS 16TH MONTH.

3. GEPI S SPECIFIC PLANS FOR REOPENING THE TORRINGTON PLANT ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. ACCORDING TO FORMER MANAGER OF TORRINGTON S LOCAL PLANT, GEPI IS STILL CONSIDERING REOPENING PLANT PRIMARILY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF KNITTING NEEDLES. (L UNITA SPECULATES THAT GEPI MAY WISH TO DIVERSIFY PRODUCTION.) GEPI REPRESENTATIVES HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING MARKET PROSPECTS WITH SEVERAL OF TORRINGTON S CURRENT ITALIAN CUSTOMERS. ADDITIONALLY, GEPI REPS HAVE REPORTEDLY MET RECENTLY WITH TORRINGTON OFFICERS IN CONNECTICUT IN HOPES OF CONVINCING THE U.S. COMPANY TO RECONSIDER ITS OPPOSITION TO A JOINT VENTURE OPERATION. LOCAL SOURCE REPORTED THAT TORRINGTON AGREED TO HAVE ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS REVIEW THIS LATEST ITALIAN PROPOSAL.DI SCIULLO

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